

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 170051

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: MNUC, PK, FR

SUBJECT: NUCLEAR FUEL REPROCESSING

REF: (A) ISLAMABAD 7274, (B) STATE 163694

1. SUMMARY: IN INFORMAL APPROACH, PAKISTAN EMBASSY OFFICERS REITERATED BACKGROUND OF MILITARY COUNCIL DECISION REPORTED REF A, PROBED FOR SIGNS OF U.S. WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE SIGNING AID COMMITMENTS, AND SUGGESTED THAT DIRECT DISCUSSIONS WITH THEIR GOVERNMENT OR THE FRENCH MIGHT REVEAL THAT NO KEY EQUIPMENT DELIVERIES ARE IN FACT SCHEDULED FOR THE PRESUMED TERM IN OFFICE OF THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION (MLA). DEPARTMENT WOULD WELCOME ANY INFORMATION
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AMEMBASSY PARIS IS ABLE TO PROVIDE ON DELIVERY SCHEDULES. UNLESS AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PERCEIVES THAT SUCH AN APPROACH WOULD BE SERIOUSLY COUNTERPRODUCTIVE AND SO INFORMS DEPARTMENT, REQUEST EMBASSY FOLLOW UP HILALY SPECULATION (PARA 5) WITH APPROACH TO GOP ASKING WHETHER ANY KEY EQUIPMENT DELIVERIES ARE SCHEDULED IN NEXT 90 DAYS. END SUMMARY.

2. APPARENTLY ACTING WITHOUT SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS, FIRST SECRETARIES ZAFAR HILALY AND JAVID HUSSAIN CALLED AT THE DEPARTMENT (NEA/PAB) JULY 18. THE PAKISTANIS EXPLAINED

THAT THE FORMAL RESPONSE RECEIVED BY AMBASSADOR HUMMEL ON JULY 17 TO HIS EARLIER FORMAL DEMARCHE WAS THE ONLY ONE POSSIBLE. THE MLA COULD NOT TAKE ANY DECISION ON REPROCESSING--EVEN ONE MERELY TO "FREEZE" KEY EQUIPMENT TRANSFERS--WITHOUT OPENING ITS CREDIBILITY AS AN INTERIM REGIME TO QUESTION. POLITICALLY, ANY FORMAL OR EVEN TACIT INFORMAL MLA DECISION TO "FREEZE" TRANSFERS "WOULD BE KNOWN TO BHUTTO BY NIGHTFALL," THUS GIVING THE FORMER PRIME MINISTER A POTENTIALLY PERSUASIVE CAMPAIGN ISSUE.

3. THE PAKISTANIS PROBED FOR A DEFINITE INDICATION OF ACTIONS WHICH WOULD "TRIGGER" THE SYMINGTON AMENDMENT. THEY WERE INFORMED THAT TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS SINCE JUNE 30, 1976, HAD CONTRAVENED THE AMENDMENT BUT THAT IT HAD NOT BEEN INVOKED BECAUSE DISCUSSIONS WITH A REASONABLE CHANCE OF MEETING ITS OBJECTIVE WERE CONTINUING.

4. IN VIEW OF THE MLA DECISION CONVEYED TO AMBASSADOR HUMMEL JULY 17, THE PAKISTANIS WERE TOLD IT WAS DOUBTFUL THAT AID OFFICIALS WOULD BE ABLE TO ATTEST THAT ALL LEGISLATIVE PREREQUISITES TO SIGNING NEW FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS, CONFIDENTIAL

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INCLUDING CONFORMITY WITH SECTION 669 OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT, HAD BEEN MET. THIS ASSERTION ALARMED HILALY, WHO IMPLIED IT WOULD BE INTERPRETED IN PAKISTAN AS MORE EVIDENCE OF U.S. "PRESSURE" TO FORCE A CHANGE IN PAKISTAN'S STANCE ON REPROCESSING.

5. HILALY SPECULATED THAT PERHAPS NO PROBLEM EXISTED IF, IN SIMPLE FACT, NO KEY EQUIPMENT DELIVERIES ARE SCHEDULED IN THE NEXT 90 DAYS OR SO. HILALY SAID HE WOULD ASK AMBASSADOR YAQUB-KHAN TO SEE WHETHER HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD PROVIDE THE EMBASSY (AND THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT) WITH SUCH A LIST. (YAQUB-KHAN IS SCHEDULED TO LEAVE ISLAMABAD JULY 22.)

6. THE MEETING CLOSED WITH A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF NYE'S TRIP TO THE SUBCONTINENT NEXT WEEK. AS THE FIRST HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIAL VISITOR TO PAKISTAN IN THIS CALENDAR YEAR, HE WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ANSWER AUTHORITATIVELY ANY POLICY OR TECHNICAL QUESTIONS, INCLUDING THOSE TOUCHING THE STATE OF PLAY WITH OTHER NATIONS ACTIVE IN THE NUCLEAR ARENA, AND TO PROPOSE ENERGY ALTERNATIVES TO THE REPROCESSING STRATEGY PAKISTAN HAS ESPOUSED.

7. DEPARTMENT WOULD WELCOME ANY INFORMATION THAT EMBASSY
PARIS MAY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE ON DELIVERY SCHEDULES. IF
EMBASSY ISLAMABAD PERCEIVES NO OBJECTIONS, REQUEST THAT
IT SEEK INFORMATION FROM GOP ON WHETHER ANY KEY EQUIPMENT
DELIVERIES ARE SCHEDULED IN THE NEXT THREE MONTHS. VANCE

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